



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/231,114	01/14/1999	HIROYUKI FUNAHASHI	102580	3398

25944 7590 02/25/2004

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. BOX 19928
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320

EXAMINER

KANG, PAUL H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2141

DATE MAILED: 02/25/2004

27

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Sc

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/231,114

Applicant(s)

FUNAHASHI, HIROYUKI

Examiner

Paul H Kang

Art Unit

2141

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 22-33 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 January 1999 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 19.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Venkatraman et al., US Pat. No. 6,170,007 B1 in view of Fujino et al., US Pat. No. 5,651,006.

3. As to claims 1, 3, 8, 11, 15, 16, 17 and 18, Venkatraman teaches the invention substantially as claimed. Venkatraman teaches a network system comprising a plurality of terminals interconnected via a network; and a controller that controls the terminals via the network, the controller comprising selecting means for selecting and controlling the plurality of terminals based on a user's designation, the terminals including printers as well as recording media (Venkatraman, col. 2, lines 16-55 and col. 3, line 9-65).

However, Venkatraman does not explicitly teach at least two of the terminals each adapted to obtain information on the other terminals therefrom, requesting means for requesting the selected terminal to transmit, to the controller, information on all the interconnected terminals; wherein the selected terminal transmits a request to the other interconnected terminals to obtain the information on the other interconnected terminals, the other interconnected

Art Unit: 2141

terminals forward to the selected terminal the information on the other interconnected terminals in response to the request, and the selected terminal forwards to the controller the information from the other interconnected terminals and information on the selected terminal.

In the same field of endeavor, Fujino teaches a method and apparatus for hierarchical network management system. Fujino teaches a requesting means for requesting the selected terminal to transmit, to the controller, information on all the interconnected terminals;

wherein the selected terminal transmits a request to the other interconnected terminals to obtain the information on the other interconnected terminals, the other interconnected terminals forward to the selected terminal the information on the other interconnected terminals in response to the request, and the selected terminal forwards to the controller the information from the other interconnected terminals and information on the selected terminal. (Fujino, col. 5, line 34 – col. 6, line 44 and col. 7, lines 1-53).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have incorporated the multiple device information obtaining means as taught by Fujino into the system of Venkatraman for the purpose of increasing the device control and status monitoring efficiency.

4. As to claims 2 and 12, Venkatraman-Fujino teach the system wherein the information on each of the other terminals includes link information for identifying the each terminal on the network (Fujino, col. 5, line 34 – col. 6, line 44 and col. 7, lines 1-53).

5. As to claims 4 and 19, Venkatraman-Fujino teach the system further comprising an interface interconnecting one terminal and the network; the controller further including an interface information obtaining means for obtaining information on the interface therefrom when the one terminal transmits the information on all the terminals to the controller (Fujino, col. 5, line 34 – col. 6, line 44 and col. 7, lines 1-53 and col. 10, line 29 – col. 11, line 39).

6. As to claims 5 and 20, Venkatraman-Fujino teach a setting changing means for changing the setting or settings of the terminal transmitting the information to the controller, or of the interface (Venkatraman, col. 3, lines 9-65).

7. As to claims 6, 9 and 13, Venkatraman-Fujino teach a memory for storing the information on all the terminals (Fujino, col. 5, line 34 – col. 6, line 44 and col. 7, lines 1-53).

8. As to claims 7, 10, 14 and 21, Venkatraman-Fujino teach a system wherein the interconnected terminals is a printer or a scanner (Venkatraman, col. 2, lines 16-55 and col. 3, line 9-65).

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 22-33 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-33 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The Applicant argued in substance that the prior art of record does not teach a network system wherein the selected terminal transmits a request to the other interconnected terminals to obtain the information on the other interconnected terminals, the other interconnected terminals forward to the selected terminal the information on the other interconnected terminals in response to the request, and the selected terminal forwards to the controller the information from the other interconnected terminals and information on the selected terminal.

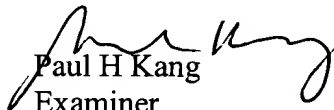
The new grounds of rejection teaches this feature.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul H Kang whose telephone number is (703) 308-6123. The examiner can normally be reached on 9 hour flex. First Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rupal Dharia can be reached on (703) 305-4003. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Paul H Kang
Examiner
Art Unit 2141